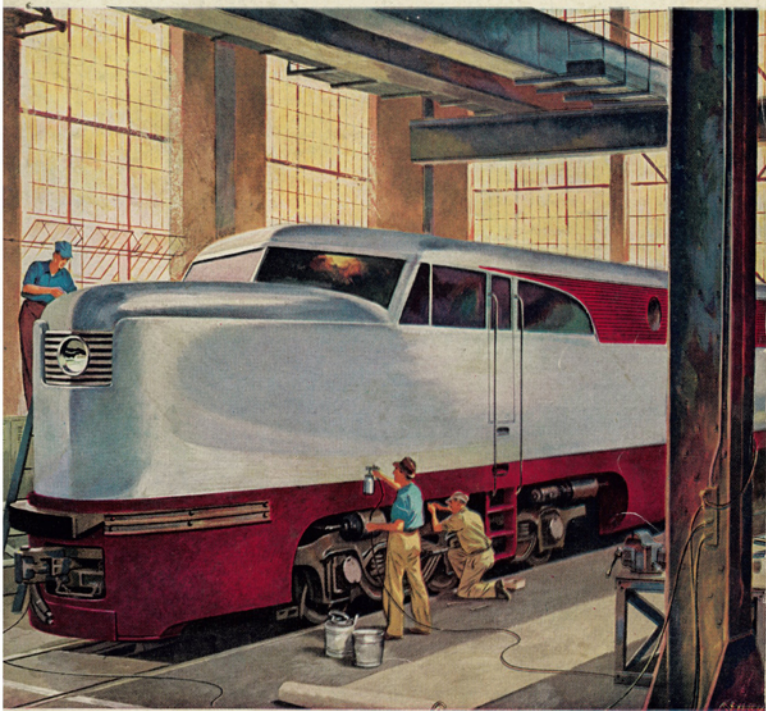


Trains

25¢

September, 1946



Southern Railway's Crescent
Photo-Story Contest

South African Railways
Short-Line Railroad Association



To Washington on the Crescent

BY ROY G. CLARK

Can you be in Washington tomorrow?" the telegram asks. Only the Western Union folks know how many millions of similar messages have gone out from our nation's capital these past five turbulent years. But even the Western Union can't say how many men have grown gray overnight trying to get Pullman reservations there on a few hours' notice.

However, we're lucky this time and at 1:30 p. m. we arrive at the Atlanta Terminal Station with a little pink ticket for Lower 4, Car 94, and with five minutes remaining for us to look over the Southern's *Crescent Limited*, the all-Pullman job that will carry us to Washington.

Up ahead our big Diesel-electric is chattering, its 4000 horses champing at the bit. Walking back, we count a postal car, a combination club car, 3 Washington Pullmans, 2 New York Pullmans, the diner, then 3 more Pullmans for New York and, on the end, a room observation car — a dignified and solid train of 12 cars with no emergency hodge-podge equipment stuck in here and there, as is so often the case these days.

The *Crescent* is the modern version of the *Washington & Southwestern Vestibuled Limited*, inaugurated in January, 1891, and the pioneer through train between New Orleans and New York. The first all-year train in the South to carry vestibule equipment, it soon gained the nickname of the *Vestibule* and folks used to spend lots of time walking from car to car just to enjoy the thrill of being able to do so without losing their hats. It was the first train, too, to operate dining cars between Atlanta and New York. The route then, as now, was Louisville & Nashville from New Orleans to Montgomery, West Point Route to Atlanta, Southern to Washington, and Pennsylvania Railroad to New York.

**From Atlanta to nation's capital is
a pleasant jaunt on Southern's all-
Pullman Limited**

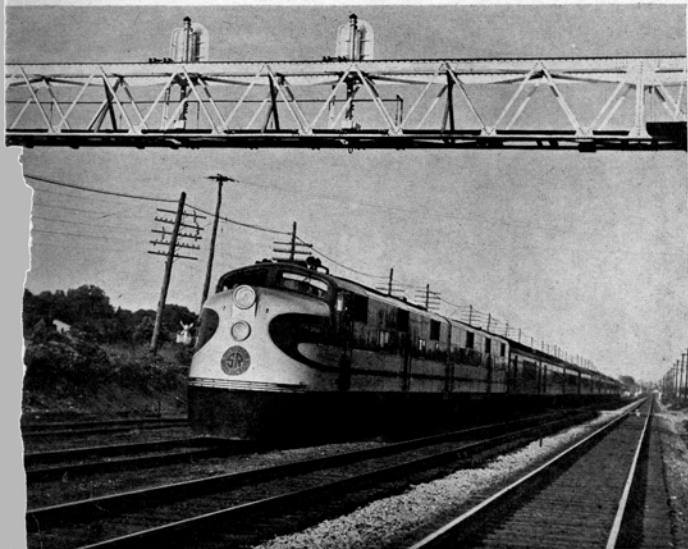
The "all aboard" call tells us to get into our car. The *Crescent* slips out of the terminal station, runs parallel with the Union Station tracks for about a mile, swings to the right and crosses the tracks of the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis. In 10 minutes we're at Peachtree Station, popular suburban point of departure for north-side Atlantans. Many a harried postwar traveler jumping aboard at the last minute, but without a Pullman ticket, has joyfully noted the empty sections when his train left the downtown terminal only to have all hope dashed when the crowds flocked aboard at Peachtree Station.

We're winding now through Atlanta's north-side residential section, reputed to be equaled in gracious beauty only by Chicago's famed North Shore region and New York's Westchester County region. A mile or so farther on and we're starting up a stiff short grade to Oglethorpe University Station. This brings to mind the nights we've listened in bed, in our

near-by home, to the diminishing rumble of the heavy tonnage freights as they worked this grade. We've strained along with the big Santa Fe's as their exhausts slowed down to less than 50 a minute, finally topping the crest at 10 miles an hour, and we've relaxed with them as they rapidly accelerated after getting over. Today our Diesel with its reserve power slips over the top in an effortless stride.

In an hour we're at Gainesville. We cross the wavy track of the Gainesville Midland, a picturesque Georgia short line, and, as we swing around a curve, we catch our first glimpse of the hazy Blue Ridge Mountains to the west. We'll see these mountains most of the afternoon, but we'll be running parallel with them and will never enter them.

Now that our tickets have been collected, let's go to the club car and look over this Southern layout. We're traveling on the main stem of the entire system, a double-track line that



Frank Clodfelter, 9 Plymouth Circle, Asheville, N. C.

extends from Atlanta to Washington in a tree-trunk fashion, its diverging lines extending from both sides like a tree's branches. Since pre-Civil War days, this historic route has been the most vital artery of commerce and traffic in the Piedmont states. Along it the Battle of the Wilderness was fought between Manassas and Orange; and during the tragic closing days Jefferson Davis fled southward over what are now Southern rails.

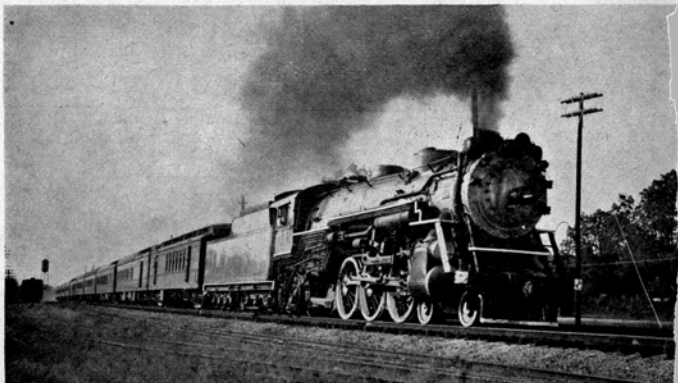
Today the line is jam-packed with a great diversification of traffic. From Greenville northward it traverses the fabulous cotton country, and later this afternoon we will pass mill after mill with bewildering regularity, and we'll recognize that the slogan "a mill a mile" is no exaggeration. Bananas from New Orleans, oil from the Southwest, manufactured products from Atlanta, and general freight from the prosperous cities on the route keep the Southern's rails bright and shiny.

The Southern is the only American railroad that offers three optional through routes between two major cities more than 1000 miles apart. The traveler from New Orleans to Washington may ride Southern rails all the way if he chooses the luxurious coach streamliner, the *Southerner*, via Meridian, Birmingham and Atlanta. Or he may take the *Crescent*, our train, and proceed via Mobile, Montgomery and Atlanta, in which case he'll be on Louisville &

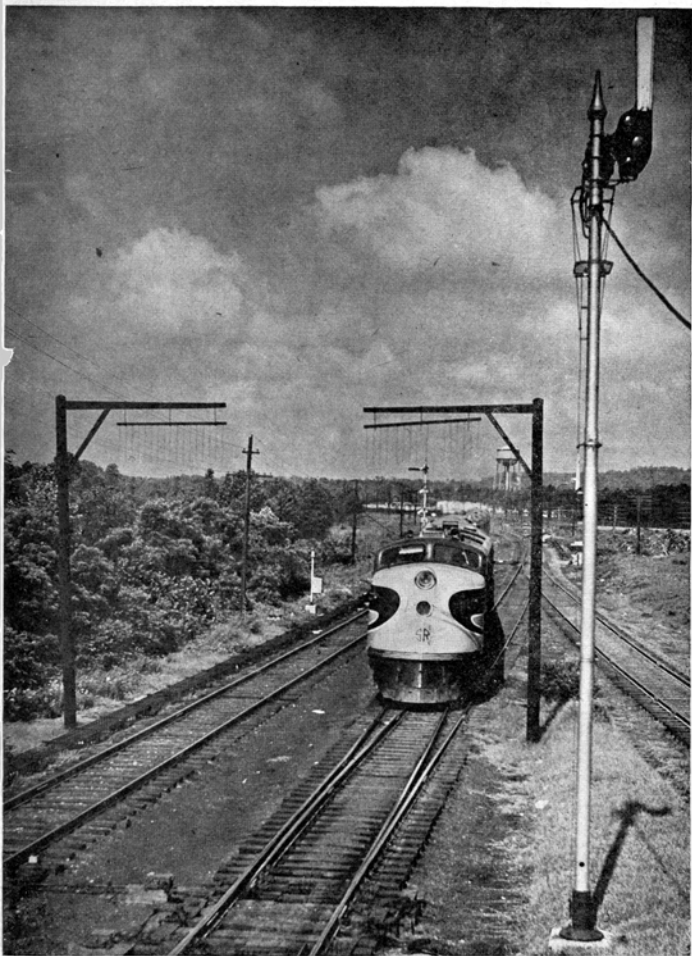
Nashville and West Point Route rails for a good part of the trip. On a third alternate route, he may go via Birmingham, Knoxville and Roanoke, riding the heavy and curving rails of the Norfolk & Western between Bristol and Lynchburg. The *Southerner* makes the fastest time, with the *Crescent* taking almost three hours longer. The Birmingham-Knoxville-Roanoke route requires two nights on the road and is much slower.

But back to the double-track Atlanta-Washington line, which is equipped with automatic block signals all the way and with automatic train stop control between Spencer and Atlanta, 306 miles. The terrain is rather rough throughout since the line runs parallel with the mountain ranges and therefore must cross all the rivers and divides which extend toward the ocean. Going northward the ruling grade is between Monroe and Charlottesville (the general locale of the wreck of the old No. 97, famed in song and story), and steam-powered passenger trains with more than 13 cars must be double-headed. Our Diesel will take the *Crescent* over the hill without help, even though

The *Crescent* approaches CR Tower near Alexandria, Va., northbound for Washington. Before Dieselization, the *Crescent* was pulled by a 4-6-2 (below). In this 1938 scene the famous vested train speeds through a sleepy South Carolina town near Greenville at 60 miles an hour.



W. H. Thrall Jr., 5839 Montebello Ave., Los Angeles 22, Calif



Frank Clodieter.

we'll have 15 cars after we leave Greensboro tonight; Charlotte, Raleigh and Asheville Pullmans will be added before then.

After we leave Lynchburg late tonight we'll be on a mighty busy piece of passenger line. Twelve daily through trains travel in each direction, not counting the fleet operated by Chesapeake & Ohio, which has trackage rights for its trains over Southern rails from Orange to Alexandria, Va., just across the Potomac from Washington.

Every railfan remembers the song hit of yesteryear, "Chattanooga Choo Choo," with its alluring line, "Dinner in the diner, nothing could be finer." It was a Southern diner that this song writer, Harry Warren, was referring to, as the hit was written shortly after he had taken a trip on the Southern's *Birmingham Special*. Let's enjoy one of the Southern's fine steaks now, which, with the rest of the meal, will convince us that Warren was right.

At 10:45 we're at Danville, junction point for the lines to Richmond and Norfolk, and it's time to go to bed. While we're asleep, our car, with several others, will be set off at Washington at 4:30 a. m., and the Washington Terminal switch

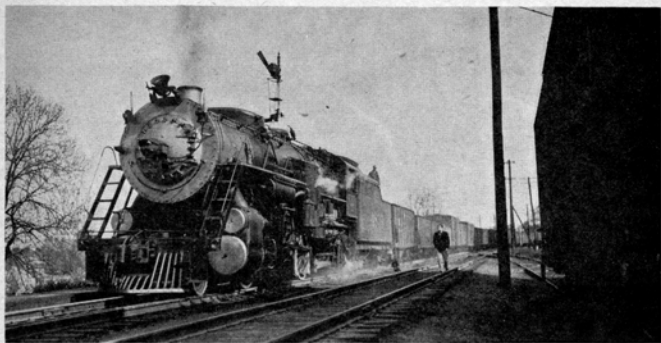
crew will do it so nicely we'll never wake up. Incidentally, the *Crescent* will have covered the 637.5 miles from Atlanta at an average speed of 42.7 miles per hour — an average that undoubtedly will be stepped up as traffic levels out.

In a way it's too bad that we're riding the *Crescent* to Washington, because we'll miss the always-new thrill of first seeing the Washington Monument and the Capitol dome as we swing over the Potomac bridge. And we'll miss the interesting view of the river from the bridge as well as the trip through the Washington tunnel that burrows right past some of our best-known government buildings. But we'll see all that when we go back to Atlanta on the *Crescent*.

Incidentally, we learn that neither the Southern nor its tenant the C&O, gets into Washington on its own rails. Going northward, Southern ownership ends at the junction with the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac at Alexandria, on which line it has trackage to the south end of the bridge; the Pennsylvania — that big old man that gets everywhere — owns the bridge and the tracks to the tunnel's south portal. The tunnel and tracks into the station are owned by the Washington Terminal Company, which, in

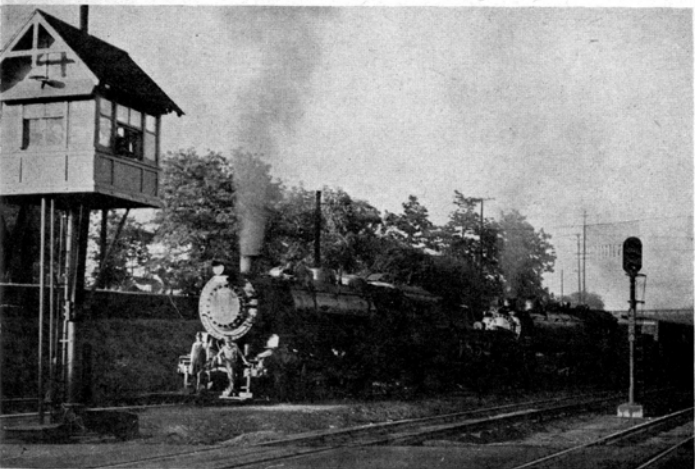


W. T. Reid Jr., P. O. Box 816, Macon, Ga.



W. H. Thrall Jr.

Our Diesel-powered Crescent is by no means the only train on the route to Washington. As we loll in air-conditioned comfort we can see from our window a great railroad at work. Above, a 2-8-2 starts a heavy train bound from Orange, Va., to Charlottesville, Monroe, and points south. Below, a switcher gives a helping hand to a freight at Spartanburg, S. C., where the Southern Railway makes connection with the Clinchfield Railroad. This line runs north 277 miles from Spartanburg to Elkhorn City, Ky. View on opposite page was taken on Atlanta-Brunswick Line as a 2-8-8-2 snaked a heavy freight toward Atlanta.



Capt. Alex. L. H. Darragh.

turn, is owned 50 per cent each by the Baltimore & Ohio and the Pennsylvania.

Huge, sprawling Washington Union Station is operated by the Terminal Company, whose tenants are the Baltimore & Ohio, Chesapeake & Ohio, Pennsylvania, RF&P and Southern. The roads from the south enter by tunnel and use the lower level tracks, while the B&O and Pennsylvania come from the north onto the upper level stub tracks. The number of trains entering and departing on the upper level is bewildering to a visitor from the hinterlands where two or three trains in the station at one time is something to talk about.

We leave our Pullman at 7:30 and crowd into a taxi that makes four other stops before it eventually deposits us at the Hotel Washington, just across from the Treasury Building and only a stone's throw from the White House grounds. After breakfast we spend several hours telephoning to secretaries, assistant secretaries and, it seems, secretaries to secretaries, only to find that we're wanted tomorrow, not today.

We decide to go sight seeing. Washington always has something additional to show every visitor; no matter how many times he goes there. Where to start? The White House, of course. Some way or other, it's second home to every American and it's the spot to which almost every visitor instinctively turns first. Despite its pretentious exterior, it is home for ordinary folks, just like you and me, and its whole atmosphere is as typically U. S. A. as ice cream or pumpkin pie.

Abigail Adams hung the family wash in the East Room, Andy Jackson hung up his stocking there for Santa Claus on Christmas eve, Grover Cleveland married his beautiful bride there and Teddy Roosevelt's children walked the stairways on stilts.

Peering through the high fence into the grounds, thinking perhaps to catch a glimpse of the President—and who hasn't hoped this?—we recall that when it was built in 1792 it was not called the White House. In fact, it was not white then, being constructed of Virginia gray freestone. White finish and paint came along in 1815, to cover the smoke stains remaining after it was partly burned by the British. Originally a nickname, the White House designation has today become as fixed and official as the name of the Treasury Building, the Capitol or any other Washington edifice.

But today is not visitors' day at the White



Copyright Harris & Ewing. Courtesy Southern Railway.

House, so we walk through the Mall, passing the famous park bench where elder statesman Bernard Baruch held his portentous conferences during the early days of the late war. In a few minutes we've reached the base of Washington Monument, known to every schoolboy in the nation. Looking up from the base, the shaft seems to swing in the wind, but that's an illusion. We're doing the weaving and swinging, brought about by trying to maintain our equilibrium while craning our necks. We recall the time, more than a few years back, when we came to Washington on a vacation and proved our prowess to our friends by climbing the stairs to the Monument's top, 555 feet. Today we take the elevator.

The view from the parapet at the top is always new, always breath-taking, no matter how many times one goes up. Nowhere else in Washington, not even in a plane, can one catch the broad conception of the Washington *Plaf* as laid out by the French engineer L'Enfant back in the 1790's. No other American city has grown and expanded in accordance with blueprints made more than 100 years ago. And the results have been very much worth while. Washington has a symmetry, a completed design, that no other American city can match.

The Monument's cornerstone was laid in 1848 and the money to begin the work was raised by popular subscription. When a height of 152 feet was attained in 1855 the money ran out and the partly completed structure stood as it was until 1878, when Congress appropriated the funds to complete the work. The capstone was put on in 1885, and it is interesting to know that Robert C. Winthrop, one of the originators

Like a green flash, train 35 thunders through the interlocking plant at CR (Cameron Run) Tower, Va., as it heads for the deep south from Washington with a Class Ps-4 Pacific at the head end. Above, the Capital of the United States.

Railroad interest in the Washington area

In the city: Union Station. Best hours are before 9 a. m. and late afternoon, when most through trains are arriving or leaving. Take B&O or George Avenue car line to B&O's suburban Silver Spring station to see impressive parade of west-bound streamliners between 5:44 and 6:04 p. m. Or see the terminal throat trackage from New York Avenue.

One day railroad trips: Round trip to Purcellville on Washington & Old Dominion. Trip can be made either morning or afternoon, departing Rosslyn, across the river from Washington, either 6:15 a. m. or 1:55 p. m. Round trip on Pennsylvania Railroad to Pope's Creek over pretty rural branch. Leave Union Station 8:10 a. m.

Interurban: Ride the Cabin John suburban trolley.

of the idea for the Monument, delivered the oration when the cornerstone was laid and also made the dedication speech 30 years later.

Although many visitors make the descent by stairway, we come down by elevator and walk down the east approach of the Mall to the stately Capitol. Its great dome, 307½ feet above ground, makes it appear nearer than it actually is, and as we climb the towering tiers of steps at the entrance we resolve to take a taxi back to our hotel when we leave. We're in full agreement that Washington is rightfully called the City of Magnificent Distances.

A guide tells us that the building's historic

cornerstone was laid by George Washington in 1793, that the wings of the partly completed structure were burned by the British in 1814, and that it was 1865 before the heroic-sized Statue of Freedom was placed atop the dome, thus completing the construction. During the Civil War the Confederate forces swept to the vicinity of Alexandria several times, and there was great fear that the unfinished Capitol dome might become a target for Confederate cannon. The attempts made then to camouflage it were probably the first efforts of the kind.

We learn that the senate is in session and we get seats in the gallery right at the rail. Sur-



W. H. Thrall Jr.

107 *Extra* dollars for pictures

You still have time to enter Trains' Photo Contest and get your share of the \$107 in prize money which is being offered in addition to the regular rates of payment for picture stories. Sit down tonight and plan a series of pictures on any railroad subject. Get your story down in outline form, then go out and shoot.

Maybe you already have a series of pictures that tell a story. If at least some of the photos were taken since January 1, 1946, the series is eligible under the rules of the contest. You may choose any railroad subject. Submit five or more photos, together with plenty of information. Don't worry about punctuation or grammar; this is a photo contest, not a writing contest. But be sure that all information is accurate and that all names, if any, are spelled correctly.

Follow these simple rules:

1. Entries will be judged on the basis of:
 - a. Subject matter and interest.
 - b. Completeness of the series.
 - c. Information supplied.
 - d. Photographic quality for reproduction purposes.
2. Prizes in addition to regular rates at time of use will be:
First Prize, \$50. Third Prize, \$15. Second Prize, \$20.
Fourth Prize, \$12. Fifth Prize, \$10.
There will be no tie prizes awarded.
3. Make sure that at least some of the pictures in your series were taken since January 1, 1946.
4. Alternate photos of the same subject, or photos that illustrate information already included and will add to the value of a series even though some may not be of as good quality.
5. All entries become our property but payment will be made according to our regular rates when published in addition to and regardless of any prize money earned. Prize money will be paid to winners when contest is announced. Publication payments will be made later as the pictures are used.
6. No entries will be returned to the entrant. The entrant may not submit any of the contest entry photos for reproduction by another user without the consent of Kalmbach Publishing Co.
7. Negatives may be kept by the entrant but we may ask to borrow them for some special reason. Entrants retain the right to sell or give extra prints to other railfans from their negatives as long as such prints are marked "not for reproduction."
8. All prints submitted must be glossy finish, not smaller than two inches square and not larger than 8 1/2" x 14".
9. If mounted, place prints on one side of the mount only, so that an entire entry can be spread out on a table. Loose-leaf albums are acceptable.
10. Include one or more pages of information about the story the pictures tell. This can be a brief but complete outline of whatever is illustrated, or it can even be as long as the Barham article in the May '46 TRAINS. This general information should be in addition to the information accompanying each photo (rule 11).
11. Include specific information with each of the pictures to make the part of the story it tells clear. Add the approximate date when the pictures were taken, locations, etc.
12. If an entry includes the work of another photographer besides yourself, be sure you have a right to submit the other man's work. At least part of the entry should be pictures taken by you. Several titles may collaborate on a single entry if desired. Photographs taken by Kalmbach Publishing Co. employees are not eligible for prizes.
13. Mark PHOTO CONTEST and your name and address on each photo and data sheet of your entry. Add the photographer's name and address on any pictures you did not take yourself.
14. Send your entry to the contest, postmarked before midnight October 31, 1946, to Photo Contest, care of TRAINS, 1027 N. 7th St., Milwaukee 3, Wis.

prisingly, the chamber is very quiet. There is none of the fiery debate and bombastic oratory that some newspaper accounts have led us to expect. A clerk is reading a bill in a sing-song drone and a few senators seem to be following along with him from their own copies, but most of the seats are empty. Back near one exit several senators are talking together, while others come in and go out very casually. Apparently the bill being considered is not particularly important, or else the decision has already been made in committee, which may account for the fact that the gallery is almost empty.

We study the faces of the men down there on the floor of the chamber. By and large, they are strong faces, radiating capability, confidence and sincerity. Looking at them we realize that, too often, our censure and ridicule is scattered over Congress as a whole, when actually it should be concentrated upon a few individuals who don't measure up. We tiptoe out of the chamber with a tightness in our throats. These men stand for democracy at work — not always working just as we want it, true, but still doing the best job the world has ever known.

The magnificent distances are beginning to tell on us, and this afternoon we're going to take a taxi when we go to the Lincoln Memorial, that glorious Doric Greek temple with a peristyle of 36 columns—one for each state when the Great Emancipator was president — and where the calm and quiet waters of the reflecting pool seem to mirror the man who was always calm and careful and unruffled when the life of this nation hung in the balance.

Then, of course, we must see the Pentagon Building, just to say that we've seen it, and after that make a quick trip through the Smithsonian Institution, which really merits a month's visit. Later on, we'll take a half-hour's ride through Rock Creek Park, where nature has been left undisturbed and where the noise and turmoil of near-by Washington seem a thousand miles away. Before we go to bed, we're going to walk past the White House again, look in at the lighted windows and ponder the splendid glory of a nation that gives every boy, rich or poor, a fair chance to live there some day.

Washington — the Greatest Free Show on Earth. And it's all yours and mine. Started by us, maintained by us and, God willing, to be perpetuated by us. It stands for the grandest conception of government of all time, and never let any carping critic tell us otherwise.